

Local USCT Regiments

12th Regiment Infantry: Organized in Tennessee at large July 24 to Aug. 14, 1863. SERVICE.--Railroad guard duty at various points in Tenn. and Ala., Nashville & Northwestern Railroad until Dec., 1864. Repulse of Hood's attack on Johnsonville, Tenn., Nov. 2, 4-5. Action at Buford's Station, Sec. 37, Nashville & Northwestern Railroad, Nov. 24. Skirmish near Clarksville, Dec. 2. Battle of Nashville Dec. 15-16. Pursuit of Hood to the Tennessee River, Dec. 17-28. Action at Decatur, Ala., Dec. 27-28. Railroad guard and garrison duty in the Dept. of the Cumberland until Jan., 1866.

13th Regiment Infantry: Organized at Nashville, Tenn., Nov. 19, 1863. SERVICE.--Railroad guard duty in Tenn. and Ala. on line of Nashville & Northwestern Railroad until Dec., 1864. Repulsed Hood's attack on Johnsonville, Tenn., Sept. 25, and Nov. 4 and 5. Eddyville, Ky., Oct. 17 (Detach.). Battle of Nashville, Dec. 15-16. Pursued Hood to the Tennessee River, Dec. 17-18. Railroad guard and garrison duty in the Dept. of the Cumberland until mustered out Jan., 1866.

14th Regiment Infantry: Organized at Gallatin, Tenn., Nov. 16, 1863, to Jan. 8, 1864. SERVICE.--Garrison duty at Chattanooga, Tenn., until Nov., 1864. March to relief of Dalton, Ga., Aug. 14. Action at Dalton, Aug. 14-15. Siege of Decatur, Ala., Oct. 27-30. Battle of Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 15-16. Overton's Hill Dec. 16. Pursuit of Hood to the Tennessee River, Dec. 17-28. Duty at Chattanooga and in District of East Tenn. until July, 1865. At Greenville and in the Dept. of the Tennessee until mustered out March, 1866.

15th Regiment Infantry: Organized at Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 2, 1863 to March 11, 1864. SERVICE.--Garrison and guard duty at Nashville, Columbia and Pulaski, Tenn., until June, 1864. Post duty at Springfield, Tenn., and District of Middle Tenn. until mustered out April, 1866.

16th Regiment Infantry: Organized at Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 4, 1863, to Feb. 13, 1864. SERVICE.--Duty at Chattanooga, Tenn., until Nov., 1864. Battle of Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 15-16. Overton Hill, Dec. 16. Pursuit of Hood to the Tennessee River, Dec. 17-28. Duty at Chattanooga and in Middle and East Tenn. until mustered out April, 1866.

17th Regiment Infantry: Organized at Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 1863 to April 1866. SERVICE.--Duty at McMinnville and Murfreesboro, Tenn., until Nov., 1864. Battle of Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 15-16. Overton Hill, Dec. 16. Pursuit of Hood to the Tennessee River, Dec. 17-27. Decatur, Dec. 28-30. Duty at Post of Nashville, Tenn. and in the Dept. of Tennessee until mustered out April, 1866.

9th Regiment Heavy Artillery: Organized at Clarksville and Nashville, Tenn., Oct. 8 to Nov. 1, 1864.

Battery "A", 2nd Regiment Light Artillery: Organized at Nashville, Tenn., April 30, 1864. SERVICE.--Garrison duty at Nashville, Tenn. and in Middle Tenn. until Jan., 1866. Battle of Nashville Dec. 15-16, 1864. Mustered out Jan. 13, 1866.



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615.862.8470

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And by Appointment



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Fort Negley

Visitors Center



UNITED STATES COLORED TROOPS



Camp of the Tennessee Colored Battery
Johnsonville, TN

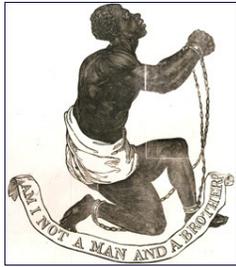


“A Peculiar Institution”

Slavery existed in America long before the start of the Civil War. Beginning in 1619, slave traders sold African slaves to wealthy farmers. Although slaves were expensive the investment lasted many lifetimes. The children of slaves were born into slavery.

As dependence on slavery grew in the South, opposition to the “peculiar institution” grew in the North. As early as 1724, the Quakers and other religious groups opposed slavery on moral grounds.

The Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, organized in England in 1787, worked to end slavery around the world. During the 1850s, the Society focused on the United States. Anti-slavery groups in the U. S. adopted the Society’s seal .



Following the Revolutionary War, the Founding Fathers did not ban but stipulated a gradual end to slavery. However, the introduction of the *cotton gin* in 1794, made cotton “king” further cementing slavery in the agricultural South.

Over the next 65 years, the States quarreled over the issue of slavery. Southern states argued for states’ rights and resented Federal involvement in their affairs.

With the 1860 election of Abraham Lincoln radicals advocated secession. On December 20, 1860, South Carolina left the Union followed by ten other states including Tennessee. In April 1861, Confederate batteries fired the first shots of the Civil War on Fort Sumter.

By 1863, with manpower waning, the Federal government passed a national conscription act authorizing the recruitment of black soldiers and established the Bureau of Colored Troops. The Bureau oversaw the organization of United States Colored Troops (USCT).

The USCT consisted of more than 140 regiments with almost 180,000 enlisted men and 7,000 officers by the end of the war.

Southern free blacks and freedmen accounted for the majority of the enlisted men. White men served as commissioned officers. Only around 100 literate black soldiers received commissions, serving as liaisons between white officers and generally illiterate troops.

In 1863, the Supervisory Committee for Recruiting Colored Regiments published this lithograph encouraging enlistment.



Come and Join Us Brothers.
Lithograph
P. S. Duval & Son

Some USCTs faced prejudice from superiors based on stereotypes receiving simpler training manuals, lower pay and inferior weapons than their white comrades.

Many black regiments distinguished themselves through enthusiasm and determination to squash slavery and racism.

Black troops proved to be indispensable to the Union army. On the battlefield, they shattered prejudice notions. Fourteen black soldiers received Congressional Medals of Honor for actions in 1864 at the Battle of Chaffin’s Farm, Virginia.

Black regiments played major roles in halting General Hood’s advance in Nashville in 1864 and at the Battle of Fort Blakely, Alabama in 1865.

The 13th USCT Regiment sustained losses of 40 percent, 229 troops killed including five color-bearers, while attacking Peach Orchard on the second day of the Battle of Nashville, December 15 and 16, 1864.

USCTs participated in over 400 battles, including 39 major engagements and lost nearly 38,000 men throughout the War.

After the War, two infantry and two cavalry regiments became regular army units stationed on the frontier fighting in the Indian wars.

The military service of USCT regiments established a precedent in America that ultimately led to gains in civil rights.



Soldier with 12-pdr Napoleon
Library of Congress